



PPE: WHEN & WHERE TO USE

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PPE in Clinical Settings

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PPE may be used/required in both community-based clinics and hospital settings. A decision on using PPE must be made whenever an HCP or learner has direct contact with a patient.¹

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How do we determine *whether* PPE is necessary?

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To determine whether PPE is necessary, a point-of-care risk assessment (PCRA) is performed. In a PCRA, the infectious risks that a patient, situation, or procedure poses to individuals, other HCPs, other patients, and visitors are assessed. A PCRA is based on a health care team's professional judgment about the clinical situation, as well as up-to-date information on how the specific healthcare facility has designed and implemented physical (engineering) and administrative controls, and the use and availability of PPE.

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Performing a PCRA is important for avoiding PPE over-reliance, misuse, or waste.¹

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Some examples of common settings where additional PPE (e.g. face shields, eye protection) could be considered are: assisting childbirth, irrigating wounds, administering anaesthetics, and observing and participating in surgeries. This is not an exhaustive list! Ask yourself or your preceptor if you could be splashed, breathe in, or come into contact with infectious agents before participating in a procedure²

 **As a student on clinical placement, you may or may not be involved in point-of-care risk assessments.**



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provincial, and local guidelines is appropriate for the task they will be performing.³*Clinical judgement/PCRA takes precedence over any other guidance or recommendations pertaining to PPE usage.*

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General PPE Guidance for Patient Care regarding COVID-19

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Some communicable diseases, like COVID-19, require additional PPE to be worn. While COVID-19 is no longer considered a global health emergency⁶, there are still practices in place to reduce the risk of transmission when caring for patients.

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1. Patients you will care for with suspected COVID-19

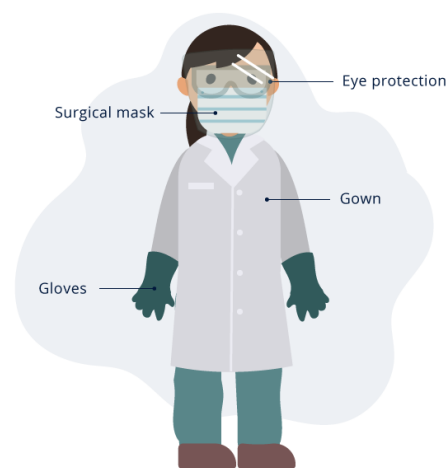
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For direct care of patients with droplet and contact precautions (within 2 metres), the following PPE is required²:

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- Gloves
- Medical (surgical/procedure) mask
- Eye protection
- Gowns

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When eye protection is recommended, students should wear safety glasses, goggles, or a face shield.

Non-aerosol-generating medical procedures (non-AGMPs)⁴

Aerosol-generating medical procedures (AGMPs)⁴

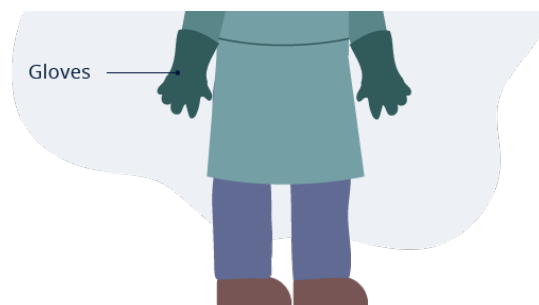


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Recommended PPE:

- Surgical/procedure mask
- Eye protection
- Gloves
- Gown

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Recommended PPE:

- N95 respirator
- Eye protection
- Gloves
- Gown

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Why aren't N95 respirators recommended for non-AGMPs involving COVID-19-suspected or -confirmed patients? ✓

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Why do I need an N95 respirator for AGMPs involving COVID-19-suspected or -confirmed patients? ✓

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■ A Note about N95s:

If you have an existing N95 respirator certification, it is imperative that you only use the model on which you have been successfully tested. If you will be using N95s, please ensure that the model you have been tested is available at your worksite. If you need to be tested to a new model, contact the [Faculty of Medicine Health & Safety team at fom.safety@ubc.ca](mailto:fom.safety@ubc.ca).





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3. BC Centre for Disease Control. COVID-19: Infection Prevention and Control Guidance for Community-Based Physicians, Nursing Professionals and Midwives in Clinic Settings. 2021. http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Professionals-Site/Documents/COVID19_IPCGuidanceCommunityBasedHCPsClinicSettings.pdf.

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4. BCCDC. Aerosol Generating Medical Procedures. <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/clinical-resources/covid-19-care/infection-control/aerosol-generating-medical-procedures>.

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5. Ministry of Health Communique: Mask Use in Health Care Facilities, 2023. http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Professionals-Site/Documents/Mask_Use_Health_Care_Facilities.pdf

6. BC Government's Statement on the World Health Organization declaring end of COVID-19 as global emergency, 2023: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2023HLTH0055-000677>

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